

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in this application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Allowed) A method of reducing noise in a transmitted signal comprised of a plurality of frames, each of said frames including a plurality of frequency bands; said method comprising the steps of :

determining a respective total signal energy and a respective current estimate of the noise energy for at least one of said plurality of frequency bands of at least one of said plurality of frames, wherein said respective current estimate of the noise energy is determined as a function of a linear predictive coding (LPC) prediction error;

determining a respective local signal-to-noise ratio (SNR_{post}) for said at least one of said plurality of frequency bands as a function of said respective signal energy and said respective current estimate of the noise energy;

determining a respective smoothed signal-to-noise ratio (SNR_{prior}) for said at least one of said plurality of frequency bands from said respective local signal-to-noise ratio and another respective signal-to-noise ratio (SNR_{est}) estimated for a previous frame; and

calculating a respective filter gain value for said at least one of said plurality of frequency bands from said respective smoothed signal-to-noise ratio.

2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein said respective local signal-to-noise ratio (SNR_{post}) is determined by the following relation:

$$SNR_{post}(f) = POS \left[\frac{E_x^p(f)}{E_n^p(f)} - 1 \right],$$

wherein POS[x] has the value x when x is positive and has the value 0 otherwise,
 $E_x^p(f)$ is said respective a perceptual total energy value and $E_n^p(f)$ is a perceptual noise energy value.

3. (Allowed) The method of claim 1 wherein said estimated respective signal-to-noise ratio (SNRest) is determined by the following relation:

$$SNR_{est}(f) = |G(f)|^2 \cdot SNR_{post}(f),$$

wherein G(f) is a prior respective signal gain and SNRpost is said respective local signal-to-noise ratio.

4. (Allowed) The method of claim 1 wherein said respective smoothed signal-to-noise ratio (SNRprior) is determined by the following relation:

$$SNR_{prior}(f) = (1 - \gamma) SNR_{post}(f) + \gamma SNR_{est}(f),$$

wherein γ is a smoothing constant, SNRpost is said respective local signal-to-noise ratio and SNRest is said estimated respective signal-to-noise ratio.

5. (Allowed) The method of claim 1 wherein said respective filter gain value is determined by the following relation:

$$G(f) = C \cdot \sqrt{[SNR_{prior}(f)]},$$

wherein SNRprior is said respective smoothed signal-to-noise ratio.

6. (Allowed) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of forming said at least one of said plurality of frames from a first number of new speech samples and a second number of prior speech samples.

7. (Allowed) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of forming said plurality of frequency bands by carrying out a fast Fourier transform (FFT) on said at least one of said plurality of frames.

8. (Allowed) The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of :
determining whether said at least one of said plurality of frames is a non-speech frame;
updating, when said at least one of said plurality of frames is a non-speech frame, said current estimate of the noise energy level of said at least one of said plurality of bands of said at least one of said plurality of frames; and
determining said respective filter gain value as a function of said updated current estimate of the noise energy level.

9. (Allowed) The method of claim 8 wherein said at least one of said plurality of frames is determined to be a non-speech frame when said at least one frame is a stationary frame.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 9 wherein said at least a respective one of said plurality of frames is determined to be a stationary frame when a

difference in a logarithm of an energy of said at least one frame and a logarithm in an energy of at a prior one of said plurality of frames is less than a first predefined threshold value and asaid linear predictive coding (LPC) prediction error exceeds a second predefined threshold value.

11. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8 wherein said at least one of said plurality of frames is determined to be a non-speech frame as a function of a sum of weighted values, each of said weighted values corresponding to a respective one of said frequency bands of said respective one of said plurality of frames, each of said weighted values being a product of a logarithm of a speech likelihood metric of said corresponding one of said frequency bands and a weighting factor of said corresponding one of said frequency bands, and when asaid linear predictive coding (LPC) prediction error exceeds a second predefined threshold value.

12. (Allowed) The method of claim 11 wherein said speech likelihood metric of said corresponding one of said frequency bands is determined by the following relation:

$$\Lambda(f) = \frac{e^{\left[\left(\frac{SNR_{prior}(f)}{1 + SNR_{prior}(f)} \right) SNR_{post}(f) \right]}}{1 + SNR_{prior}(f)},$$

wherein SNR_{post} is said respective local signal-to-noise ratio and SNR_{prior} is said respective smoothed signal-to-noise ratio.

13. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8 wherein said at least a respective one of said plurality of frames is determined to be a non-speech frame as a function of a normalized skewness value of a linear predictive coding (LPC) residual of said at least a respective one of said plurality of frames and when ~~asaid~~ linear predictive coding (LPC) prediction error exceeds a second redefined threshold value.

14. (Allowed) The method of claim 13 wherein said skewness value of said LPC residual is determined by the following relation:

$$SK = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{n=0}^{N-1} [e(n)]^3,$$

wherein $e(n)$ are sampled values of an LPC residual, and N is a frame length.

15. (Allowed) The method of claim 14 wherein said skewness value is normalized by a function of an estimated value of a total energy E_x of said respective one of said plurality of frames, said total energy E_x being determined by the following relation:

$$E_x = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{n=0}^{N-1} [e(n)]^2,$$

wherein $e(n)$ are sampled values of an LPC residual, and N is a frame length.

16. (Allowed) The method of claim 14 wherein said skewness value is normalized by a function of an estimated value of a variance of said skewness value, said variance being determined by the following relation:

$$Var[SK] = \frac{15E^3}{N^2},$$

wherein E_n is said current estimate of the noise energy level and N is a frame length.

17. (Allowed) The method of claim 8 wherein said current estimate of the noise energy level is determined by the following relation:

$$E(m+1, f) = (1 - \alpha)E(m, f) + \alpha E_n(m, f),$$

wherein $E(m, f)$ is a prior estimated noise energy level, $E_n(m, f)$ is a band energy, m is an iteration index and α is an update constant.

18. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 17 wherein a value of said update constant α is determined by one of a watchdog timer being expired, said at least one of said plurality of frames being stationary, said at least one of said plurality of frames being a non-speech frame, a LPC residual of said at least one of said plurality of frames having substantially zero skewness, a current value of said estimated noise energy level being greater than a total energy of said plurality of frames and asaid linear predictive coding (LPC) predicting error exceeding a predefined threshold value.

19. (Allowed) The method of claim 17 wherein said estimated noise level is forced to be updated when said estimated noise level is not updated within a preset interval.

20. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein said ~~filtering~~ filter gain is further adjusted as a function of an aggressiveness setting parameter (F) according to the following relation:

$$G'(f) = \sqrt{[1 - F \cdot (1 - G(f)^2)]}$$

wherein G(f) is said filtering gain prior to being adjusted.

21. (Allowed) The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:
determining a respective speech likelihood metric of each of said plurality of said frequency bands of said at least one of said plurality of frames; determining a number of said plurality of said frequency bands having said respective speech likelihood metric above a threshold value; and setting, when said number exceeds a predetermined percentage of a total number of said plurality of said frequency bands, said filter gain for each of said plurality of said frequency bands to a minimum value.

22. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 11 wherein an said ~~filtering~~ filter gain is set to a minimum value when said speech likelihood metric is less than a threshold value.

23. (Allowed) A method of reducing noise in a transmitted signal comprised of a plurality of frames, each of said frames including a plurality of frequency bands; said method comprising the steps of :

determining, as a function of a linear predictive coding (LPC) prediction error, whether at least a respective one of said plurality of frames is a non-speech frame;

estimating, when said at least one of said plurality of frames is a non-speech frame, a noise energy level of at least one of said plurality of bands of said at least a respective one of said plurality of frames; and

filtering said at least one band as a function of said estimated noise level.

24. (Allowed) The method of claim 23 wherein said at least a respective one of said plurality of frames is determined to be a non-speech frame when said at least one frame is a stationary frame.

25. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 24 wherein said at least a respective one of said plurality of frames is determined to be a stationary frame when a difference in a logarithm of an energy of said at least one frame and a logarithm in an energy of at a prior one of said plurality of frames is less than a first predefined threshold value and ~~a~~said linear predictive coding (LPC) prediction error exceeds a second predefined threshold value.

26. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 23 wherein said at least a respective one of said plurality of frames is determined to be a non-speech frame as a function of a sum of weighted values, each of said weighted values corresponding to a respective one of said frequency bands of said respective one of said plurality of frames, each of said weighted values being a product of a logarithm of a speech likelihood metric of said corresponding one of said frequency bands and a weighting factor of said

corresponding one of said frequency bands, and when a said linear predictive coding (LPC) prediction error exceeds a second predefined threshold value.

27. (Allowed) The method of claim 26 wherein said speech likelihood metric of said corresponding one of said frequency bands is determined by the following relation:

$$\Lambda(f) = \frac{e^{\left[\left(\frac{SNR_{prior}(f)}{1 + SNR_{prior}(f)} \right) SNR_{post}(f) \right]}}{1 + SNR_{prior}(f)},$$

wherein SNR_{post} is said respective local signal-to-noise ratio and SNR_{prior} is said respective smoothed signal-to-noise ratio.

28. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 23 wherein said at least a respective one of said plurality of frames is determined to be a non-speech frame as a function of a normalized skewness value of a said linear predictive coding (LPC) residual of said at least a respective one of said plurality of frames and when of a linear predictive coding (LPC) prediction error exceeds a second predefined threshold value.

29. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 28 wherein said skewness value of said LPC residual is determined by the following relation:

$$SK = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{n=0}^{N-1} [e(n)]^3,$$

wherein $e(n)$ are sampled values of a said LPC residual, and N is a frame length.

30. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 29 wherein said skewness value is normalized by a function of an estimated value of a total energy E_x of said respective one of said plurality of frames, said total energy E_x being determined by the following relation:

$$E_x = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{n=0}^{N-1} [e(n)]^2,$$

wherein $e(n)$ are sampled values of an said LPC residual, and N is a frame length.

31. (Allowed) The method of claim 29 wherein said skewness value is normalized by a function of an estimated value of a variance of said skewness value, said variance being determined by the following relation:

$$Var[SK] = \frac{15E^3}{N},$$

wherein E_n is said current estimate of the noise energy level and N is a frame length.

32. (Allowed) The method of claim 23 wherein said estimated noise level is determined by the following relation:

$$E(m+1, f) = (1 - \alpha)E(m, f) + \alpha E_{ch}(m, f),$$

wherein $E(m, f)$ is a prior estimated noise energy level, $E_{ch}(m, f)$ is a band energy, m is an iteration index and α is an update constant.

33. (Allowed) The method of claim 32 wherein a value of said update constant α is determined by one of a watchdog timer being expired, said at least one of said plurality of frames being stationary, said at least one of said plurality of frames being a non-speech

frame, a LPC residual of said at least one of said plurality of frames having substantially zero skewness, a current value of said estimated noise energy level being greater than a total energy of said plurality of frames and ~~a~~said linear predictive coding (LPC) prediction error exceeding a predefined threshold value.

34. (Allowed) An apparatus of reducing noise in a transmitted signal including a plurality of frames, each of said frames including a plurality of frequency bands; said apparatus comprising:

means for determining a respective total signal energy and a respective current estimate of the noise energy for at least one of said plurality of frequency bands of at least one of said plurality of frames, wherein said respective current estimate of the noise energy is determined as a function of a linear predictive coding (LPC) prediction error;

means for determining a respective local signal-to-noise ratio (SNR_{post}) for said at least one of said plurality of frequency bands as a function of said respective signal energy and said respective current estimate of the noise energy;

means for determining a respective smoothed signal-to-noise ratio (SNR_{prior}) for said at least one of said plurality of frequency bands from said respective local signal-to-noise ratio and another respective signal-to-noise ratio (SNR_{rest}) estimated for a previous frame; and

means for calculating a respective filter gain value for said at least one of said plurality of frequency bands from said respective smoothed signal-to-noise ratio.

35. (Allowed) The apparatus of claim 34 wherein said respective local signal-to-noise ratio (SNR_{post}) is determined by the following relation:

$$SNR_{post}(f) = POS\left[\frac{E_s^p(f)}{E_n^p(f)} - 1\right],$$

wherein $POS[x]$ has the value x when x is positive and has the value 0 otherwise, $E_s^p(f)$ is a perceptual total energy value and $E_n^p(f)$ is a perceptual noise energy value.

36. (Allowed) The apparatus of claim 34 wherein said estimated respective signal-to-noise ratio (SNR_{est}) is determined by the following relation:

$$SNR_{est}(f) = |G(f)|^2 \cdot SNR_{post}(f),$$

wherein $G(f)$ is a prior respective signal gain and SNR_{post} is said respective local signal-to-noise ratio.

37. (Allowed) The apparatus of claim 34 wherein said respective smoothed signal-to-noise ratio (SNR_{prior}) is determined by the following relation:

$$SNR_{prior}(f) = (1 - \gamma)SNR_{post}(f) + \gamma SNR_{est}(f),$$

wherein γ is a smoothing constant, SNR_{post} is said respective local signal-to-noise ratio and SNR_{est} is said estimated respective signal-to-noise ratio.

38. (Allowed) The apparatus of claim 34 wherein said respective filter gain value is determined by the following relation:

$$G(f) = C \cdot \sqrt{[SNR_{prior}(f)]},$$

wherein SNR_{prior} is said respective smoothed signal-to-noise ratio.

39. (Allowed) The apparatus of claim 34 further comprising the means for forming said at least one of said plurality of frames from a first number of new speech samples and a second number of prior speech samples.

40. (Allowed) The apparatus of claim 34 further comprising means for forming said plurality of frequency bands by carrying out a fast Fourier transform (FFT) on said at least one of said plurality of frames.

41. (Allowed) The apparatus of claim 34 further comprising:
means for determining whether said at least one of said plurality of frames is a non-speech frame;

means for updating, when said at least one of said plurality of frames is a non-speech frame, said current estimate of the noise energy level of said at least one of said plurality of bands of said at least one of said plurality of frames; and

means for determining said respective filter gain value as a function of said updated current estimate of the noise energy level.

42. (Allowed) The apparatus of claim 41 wherein said at least one of said plurality of frames is determined to be a non-speech frame when said at least one frame is a stationary frame.

43. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 42 wherein said at least a respective one of said plurality of frames is determined to be a stationary frame when a

difference in a logarithm of an energy of said at least one frame and a logarithm in an energy of at a prior one of said plurality of frames is less than a first predefined threshold value and a said linear predictive coding (LPC) prediction error exceeds a second predefined threshold value.

44. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 42 wherein said at least one of said plurality of frames is determined to be a non-speech frame as a function of a sum of weighted value, each of said weighted values corresponding to a respective one of said frequency bands of said respective one of said plurality of frames, each of said weighted values being a product of a logarithm of a speech likelihood metric of said corresponding one of said frequency bands and a weighting factor of said corresponding one of said frequency bands, and when a said linear predictive coding (LPC) prediction error exceeds a second predefined threshold value.

45. (Allowed) The apparatus of claim 44 wherein said speech likelihood metric of said corresponding one of said frequency bands is determined by the following relation:

$$\Lambda(f) = \frac{e^{\left[\left(\frac{SNR_{prior}(f)}{1 + SNR_{prior}(f)} \right) SNR_{post}(f) \right]}}{1 + SNR_{prior}(f)},$$

wherein SNR_{post} is said respective local signal-to-noise ratio and SNR_{prior} is said respective smoothed signal-to-noise ratio.

46. (Allowed) The apparatus of claim 41 wherein said at least a respective one of said plurality of frames is determined to be a non-speech frame as a function of a normalized skewness value of a linear predictive coding (LPC) residual of said at least a respective one of said plurality of frames and when a linear predictive coding (LPC) prediction error exceeds a second predefined threshold value.

47. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 46 wherein said skewness value of said LPC residual is determined by the following relation:

$$SK = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{n=0}^{N-1} [e(n)]^3,$$

wherein $e(n)$ are sampled values of an said LPC residual, and N is a frame length.

48. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 47 wherein said skewness value is normalized by an estimated value of a total energy E_x of said respective one of said plurality of frames, said total energy E_x being determined by the following relation:

$$E_x = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{n=0}^{N-1} [e(n)]^2,$$

wherein $e(n)$ are sampled values of an said LPC residual, and N is a frame length.

49. (Allowed) The apparatus of claim 47 wherein said skewness value is normalized by a function of an estimated value of a variance of said skewness value, said variance being determined by the following relation:

$$Var[SK] = \frac{15E_x^3}{N},$$

wherein E_n is said current estimate of the noise energy level and N is a frame length.

50. (Allowed) The apparatus of claim 41 wherein said estimated noise level is determined by the following relation:

$$E(m+1, f) = (1 - \alpha)E(m, f) + \alpha E_{ch}(m, f),$$

wherein $E(m, f)$ is a prior estimated noise energy level, $E_{ch}(m, f)$ is a band energy, m is an iteration index and α is an update constant.

51. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 50 wherein a value of said update constant α is determined by one of a watchdog timer being expired, said at least one of said plurality of frames being stationary, said at least one of said plurality of frames being a non-speech frame, a LPC residual of said at least one of said plurality of frames having substantially zero skewness, a current value of said estimated noise energy level being greater than a total energy of said plurality of frames and asaid linear predictive coding (LPC) prediction error exceeding a predefined threshold value.

52. (Allowed) The apparatus of claim 41 wherein said estimated noise level is forced to be updated when said estimated noise level is not updated within a preset interval.

53. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 34 wherein said ~~filtering~~ filter gain is further adjusted as a function of an aggressiveness setting parameter (F) according to the following relation:

$$G'(f) = \sqrt{[1 - F \cdot (1 - G(f)^2)]} ,$$

wherein G(f) is said filtering gain prior to being adjusted.

54. (Allowed) The apparatus of claim 34 further comprising the steps of:
determining a respective speech likelihood metric of each of said plurality of said frequency bands of said at least one of said plurality of frames; determining a number of said plurality of said frequency bands having said respective speech likelihood metric above a threshold value; and setting, when said number exceeds a predetermined percentage of a total number of said plurality of said frequency bands, said filter gain for each of said plurality of said frequency bands to a minimum value.

55. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 44 wherein said ~~filtering~~ filter gain is set to a minimum value when said speech likelihood metric is less than a threshold value.

56. (Allowed) An apparatus of reducing noise in a transmitted signal including a plurality of frames, each of said frames including a plurality of frequency bands; said apparatus comprising the steps of :

means for determining, as a function of a linear predictive coding (LPC) prediction error, whether at least a respective one of said plurality of frames is a non-speech frame;

means for estimating, when said at least one of said plurality of frames is a non-speech frame, a noise energy level of at least one of said plurality of bands of said at least a respective one of said plurality of frames; and

means for filtering said at least one band as a function of said estimated noise level.

57. (Original) The apparatus of claim 56 wherein said at least a respective one of said plurality of frames is determined to be a non-speech frame when said at least one frame is a stationary frame.

58. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 57 wherein said at least a respective one of said plurality of frames is determined to be a stationary frame when a difference in a logarithm of an energy of said at least one frame and a logarithm in an energy of at a prior one of said plurality of frames is less than a first predefined threshold value and ~~a~~ said linear predictive coding (LPC) prediction error exceeds a second predefined threshold value.

59. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 56 wherein said at least a respective one of said plurality of frames is determined to be a non-speech frame as a function of a sum of weighted values, each of said weighted values corresponding to a

respective one of said frequency bands of said respective one of said plurality of frames, each of said weighted values being a product of a logarithm of a speech likelihood metric of said corresponding one of said frequency bands and a weighting factor of said corresponding one of said frequency bands, and when a said linear predictive coding (LPC) prediction error exceeds a second predefined threshold value.

60. (Allowed) The apparatus of claim 59 wherein said speech likelihood metric of said corresponding one of said frequency bands is determined by the following relation:

$$\Lambda(f) = \frac{e^{\left[\left(\frac{SNR_{prior}(f)}{1 + SNR_{prior}(f)} \right) SNR_{post}(f) \right]}}{1 + SNR_{prior}(f)},$$

wherein SNR_{post} is said respective local signal-to-noise ratio and SNR_{prior} is said respective smoothed signal-to-noise ratio.

61. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 56 wherein said at least a respective one of said plurality of frames is determined to be a non-speech frame as a function of a normalized skewness value of a linear predictive coding (LPC) residual of said at least a respective one of said plurality of frames and when a said linear predictive coding (LPC) prediction error exceeds a second predefined threshold value.

62. (Allowed) The apparatus of claim 61 wherein said skewness value of said LPC residual is determined by the following relation:

$$SK = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{n=0}^{N-1} [e(n)]^3,$$

wherein $e(n)$ are sampled values of an LPC residual, and N is a frame length.

63. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 61 wherein said skewness value is normalized by an estimated value of a total energy E_x of said respective one of said plurality of frames, said total energy E_x being determined by the following relation:

$$E_x = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{n=0}^{N-1} [e(n)]^2,$$

wherein $e(n)$ are sampled values of ~~an~~ said LPC residual, and N is a frame length.

64. (Allowed) The apparatus of claim 62 wherein said skewness value is normalized by a function of an estimated value of a variance of said skewness value, said variance being determined by the following relation:

$$Var[SK] = \frac{15E_n^3}{N},$$

wherein E_n is said current estimate of the noise energy level and N is a frame length.

65. (Allowed) The apparatus of claim 56 wherein said estimated noise level is determined by the following relation:

$$E(m+1, f) = (1 - \alpha)E(m, f) + \alpha E_{ch}(m, f),$$

wherein $E(m, f)$ is a prior estimated noise energy level, $E_{ch}(m, f)$ is a band energy, m is an iteration index and α is an update constant.

66. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 65 wherein a value of said update constant α is determined by one of a watchdog timer being expired, said at least one of said plurality of frames being stationary, said at least one of said plurality of frames being a non-speech frame, a LPC residual of said at least one of said plurality of frames having substantially zero skewness, a current value of said estimated noise energy level being greater than a total energy of said plurality of frames and ~~asaid~~ linear predictive coding (LPC) prediction error exceeding a predefined threshold value.

67. (Allowed) The method of claim 10 wherein said LPC prediction error (PE) is determined by the following relation:

$$PE = \prod_{k=0}^{K-1} [1 - rc_k^2],$$

wherein rc_k is a reflection coefficient generated by LPC analysis.

68. (Allowed) The method of claim 11 wherein said LPC prediction error (PE) is determined by the following relation:

$$PE = \prod_{k=0}^{K-1} [1 - rc_k^2],$$

wherein rc_k is a reflection coefficient generated by LPC analysis.

69. (Allowed) The method of claim 13 wherein said LPC prediction error (PE) is determined by the following relation:

$$PE = \prod_{k=0}^{K-1} [1 - rc_k^2],$$

wherein rc_k is a reflection coefficient generated by LPC analysis.

70. (Allowed) The method of claim 18 wherein said LPC prediction error (PE) is determined by the following relation:

$$PE = \prod_{k=0}^{K-1} [1 - rc_k^2],$$

wherein rc_k is a reflection coefficient generated by LPC analysis.

71. (Allowed) The method of claim 25 wherein said LPC prediction error (PE) is determined by the following relation:

$$PE = \prod_{k=0}^{K-1} [1 - rc_k^2],$$

wherein rc_k is a reflection coefficient generated by LPC analysis.

72. (Allowed) The method of claim 26 wherein said LPC prediction error (PE) is determined by the following relation:

$$PE = \prod_{k=0}^{K-1} [1 - rc_k^2],$$

wherein rc_k is a reflection coefficient generated by LPC analysis.

73. (Allowed) The method of claim 28 wherein said LPC prediction error (PE) is determined by the following relation:

$$PE = \prod_{k=0}^{K-1} [1 - rc_k^2],$$

wherein rc_k is a reflection coefficient generated by LPC analysis.

74. (Allowed) The method of claim 33 wherein said LPC prediction error (PE) is determined by the following relation:

$$PE = \prod_{k=0}^{K-1} [1 - rc_k^2],$$

wherein rc_k is a reflection coefficient generated by LPC analysis.

75. (Allowed) The of claim 43 wherein said LPC prediction error (PE) is determined by the following relation:

$$PE = \prod_{k=0}^{K-1} [1 - rc_k^2],$$

wherein rc_k is a reflection coefficient generated by LPC analysis.

76. (Allowed) The of claim 44 wherein said LPC prediction error (PE) is determined by the following relation:

$$PE = \prod_{k=0}^{K-1} [1 - rc_k^2],$$

wherein rc_k is a reflection coefficient generated by LPC analysis.

77. (Allowed) The of claim 46 wherein said LPC prediction error (PE) is determined by the following relation:

$$PE = \prod_{k=0}^{K-1} [1 - rc_k^2],$$

wherein rc_k is a reflection coefficient generated by LPC analysis.

78. (Allowed) The of claim 51 wherein said LPC prediction error (PE) is determined by the following relation:

$$PE = \prod_{k=0}^{K-1} [1 - rc_k^2],$$

wherein rc_k is a reflection coefficient generated by LPC analysis.

79. (Allowed) The of claim 58 wherein said LPC prediction error (PE) is determined by the following relation:

$$PE = \prod_{k=0}^{K-1} [1 - rc_k^2],$$

wherein rc_k is a reflection coefficient generated by LPC analysis.

80. (Allowed) The of claim 59 wherein said LPC prediction error (PE) is determined by the following relation:

$$PE = \prod_{k=0}^{K-1} [1 - rc_k^2],$$

wherein rc_k is a reflection coefficient generated by LPC analysis.

81. (Allowed) The of claim 61 wherein said LPC prediction error (PE) is determined by the following relation:

$$PE = \prod_{k=0}^{K-1} [1 - rc_k^2],$$

wherein rc_k is a reflection coefficient generated by LPC analysis.

82. (Allowed) The of claim 66 wherein said LPC prediction error (PE) is determined by the following relation:

$$PE = \prod_{k=0}^{K-1} [1 - rc_k^2],$$

wherein rc_k is a reflection coefficient generated by LPC analysis.

83. (Allowed) The method of claim 15 wherein said normalized skewness value γ_3 is determined by the following relation:

$$\gamma_3 = \frac{SK}{E_x^{1.5}}$$

84. (Allowed) The method of claim 16 wherein said normalized skewness value γ_3' is determined by the following relation:

$$\gamma_3' = \frac{SK}{\sqrt{\frac{15E_n^3}{N}}}$$

85. (Allowed) The method of claim 30 wherein said normalized skewness value γ_3 is determined by the following relation:

$$\gamma_3 = \frac{SK}{E_x^{1.5}}$$

86. (Allowed) The method of claim 31 wherein said normalized skewness value γ_3' is determined by the following relation:

$$\gamma_3' = \frac{SK}{\sqrt{\frac{15E_n^3}{N}}}$$

87. (Allowed) The of claim 48 wherein said normalized skewness value γ_3 is determined by the following relation:

$$\gamma_3 = \frac{SK}{E_x^{1.5}}$$

88. (Allowed) The of claim 49 wherein said normalized skewness value γ_3' is determined by the following relation:

$$\gamma_3' = \frac{SK}{\sqrt{\frac{15E_n^3}{N}}}$$

89. (Allowed) The of claim 63 wherein said normalized skewness value γ_3 is determined by the following relation:

$$\gamma_3 = \frac{SK}{E_x^{1.5}}$$

90. (Allowed) The of claim 64 wherein said normalized skewness value γ_3' is determined by the following relation:

$$\gamma_3' = \frac{SK}{\sqrt{\frac{15E_n^3}{N}}}$$

91. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 17 wherein said update constant α has a value of 0.002 when a watchdog timer is expired and a said linear predictive coding (LPC) prediction error (PE) exceeds a predefined LPC prediction error threshold value T_{PE1} ; said update constant α has a value of 0.05 when said at least one of said plurality of frames is stationary; said update constant α has a value of 0.1 when a noise likelihood value is less than a noise likelihood threshold value T_{LIK} and said LPC prediction error PE is greater than a predefined LPC prediction error threshold value T_{PE2} such that said at least one of said plurality of frames is a non-speech frame; said update constant α has a value of 0.05 when an absolute value of a normalized skewness of a LPC residual is less than a first threshold value T_a , said skewness of said LPC residual being normalized by total energy, or is less than a second threshold value T_b , said skewness of said LPC residual being normalized by a variance of said skewness of said LPC residual, and when said LPC prediction error PE is greater than a predefined LPC prediction error threshold value T_{PE2} so that a said LPC residual of said at least one of said plurality of

frames has substantially zero skewness; and said update constant α has a value of 0.1 when a current value of said estimated noise energy level is greater than a total energy of said plurality of frames.

92. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 32 wherein said update constant α has a value of 0.002 when a watchdog timer is expired and ~~a~~said linear predictive coding (LPC) prediction error (PE) exceeds a predefined LPC prediction error threshold value T_{PE1} ; said update constant α has a value of 0.05 when said at least one of said plurality of frames is stationary; said update constant α has a value of 0.1 when a noise likelihood value is less than a noise likelihood threshold value T_{LIK} and said LPC prediction error PE is greater than a predefined LPC prediction error threshold value T_{PE2} such that said at least one of said plurality of frames is a non-speech frame; said update constant α has a value of 0.05 when an absolute value of a normalized skewness of a LPC residual is less than a first threshold value T_a , said skewness of said LPC residual being normalized by total energy, or is less than a second threshold value T_b , said skewness of said LPC residual being normalized by a variance of said skewness of said LPC residual, and when said LPC prediction error PE is greater than a predefined LPC prediction error threshold value T_{PE2} so that ~~a~~said LPC residual of said at least one of said plurality of frames has substantially zero skewness; and said update constant α has a value of 0.1 when a current value of said estimated noise energy level is greater than a total energy of said plurality of frames.

93. (Currently Amended) The of claim 50 wherein said update constant α has a value of 0.002 when a watchdog timer is expired and a said linear predictive coding (LPC) prediction error (PE) exceeds a predefined LPC prediction error threshold value T_{PE1} ; said update constant α has a value of 0.05 when said at least one of said plurality of frames is stationary; said update constant α has a value of 0.1 when a noise likelihood value is less than a noise likelihood threshold value T_{LIK} and said LPC prediction error PE is greater than a predefined LPC prediction error threshold value T_{PE2} such that said at least one of said plurality of frames is a non-speech frame; said update constant α has a value of 0.05 when an absolute value of a normalized skewness of a LPC residual is less than a first threshold value T_a , said skewness of said LPC residual being normalized by total energy, or is less than a second threshold value T_b , said skewness of said LPC residual being normalized by a variance of said skewness of said LPC residual, and when said LPC prediction error PE is greater than a predefined LPC prediction error threshold value T_{PE2} so that a LPC residual of said at least one of said plurality of frames has substantially zero skewness; and said update constant α has a value of 0.1 when a current value of said estimated noise energy level is greater than a total energy of said plurality of frames.

94. (Currently Amended) The of claim 65 wherein said update constant α has a value of 0.002 when a watchdog timer is expired and a said linear predictive coding (LPC) prediction error (PE) exceeds a predefined LPC prediction error threshold value T_{PE1} ; said update constant α has a value of 0.05 when said at least one of said plurality of frames is stationary; said update constant α has a value of 0.1 when a noise likelihood

value is less than a noise likelihood threshold value T_{LIK} and said LPC prediction error PE is greater than a predefined LPC prediction error threshold value T_{PE2} such that said at least one of said plurality of frames is a non-speech frame; said update constant α has a value of 0.05 when an absolute value of a normalized skewness of a LPC residual is less than a first threshold value T_a , said skewness of said LPC residual being normalized by total energy, or is less than a second threshold value T_b , said skewness of said LPC residual being normalized by a variance of said skewness of said LPC residual, and when said LPC prediction error PE is greater than a predefined LPC prediction error threshold value T_{PE2} so that asaid LPC residual of said at least one of said plurality of frames has substantially zero skewness; and said update constant α has a value of 0.1 when a current value of said estimated noise energy level is greater than a total energy of said plurality of frames.

95. (Allowed) The method of claim 2 wherein said perceptual total energy value $E_x^p(f)$ is determined by the following relation:

$$E_x^p(f) = W(f) \otimes E_x(f),$$

and said perceptual noise energy $E_n^p(f)$ is determined by the following relation:

$$E_n^p(f) = W(f) \otimes E_n(f),$$

wherein $E_x(f)$ is said respective total signal energy and $E_n(f)$ is said respective current estimate of the noise energy, \otimes denotes convolution and $W(f)$ is an auditory filter centered at f .

96. (Allowed) The apparatus of claim 35 wherein said perceptual total energy value $E_x^p(f)$ is determined by the following relation:

$$E_x^p(f) = W(f) \otimes E_x(f),$$

and said perceptual noise energy $E_n^p(f)$ is determined by the following relation:

$$E_n^p(f) = W(f) \otimes E_n(f),$$

wherein $E_x(f)$ is said respective total signal energy and $E_n(f)$ is said respective current estimate of the noise energy, \otimes denotes convolution and $W(f)$ is an auditory filter centered at f .

97.-111. (Cancelled)